



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

**Region 3 Citizens' Advisory Committee
Helena, MT
June 12, 2008**

CAC Attendees: Rick Arnold, Bob Gibson, LeRoy Mehring, Joe Cohenour, Ted Coffman, Gene Budeski, Sam Samson, Amy McNamara, Cyndi Andrus, Craig Sharpe, Dennis Grundman, DJ Johnson, Tom Milesnik, Ed Peretti, Tom Henderson, Michael Leach

Staff Present: Pat Flowers, Jerry Walker, Sam Sheppard, Kari Janikula, Maria Blevins, Charlie Sperry, Kurt Alt, Joan Buhl

Guests: Lee Kinsey, Robin Cunningham, Wayne Johnston, Mack Minard, and Russ Kip

Pat Flowers: Welcome, introductions, review of agenda
Montana Outfitters and Guides Association, Board of Outfitters, Fishing Outfitters Assoc. are here to offer their perspectives on critical issues and concerns identified at our last meeting.

Additions to agenda: Trapping resolution drafted by Joe Cohenour
Fort Peck Hatchery Funding – LeRoy Mehring

Updates: Pat Flowers

Brucellosis in Paradise Valley: Montana has lost its brucellosis free status. At this point, we do not know what the source of the brucellosis (some implying wildlife, i.e., elk). Test results will not be available until mid- to late-summer. FWP will be taking several steps regarding this issue including: increased testing, increased outreach and education efforts to hunters, landowners and outfitters, habitat enhancement/acquisition, elk management, and improving access.

Bison Management: More bison shipped to slaughter this year than in the past. In response to the Government Accountability Office, a series of meetings will be held over the next six months to develop a response to criticism of the plan. A lawsuit was filed forcing DOL to operate under the Interagency Bison Management Plan.

Madison Valley Elk Management: Madison Valley Ranchlands Group subcommittee unsuccessful in coming up with a solution that would meet everyone's needs. FWP

proposed a season type that created opposition from landowners and outfitter-landowners. Meeting on June 24 to start on a new collaborative effort to develop a season type that meets landowners' and FWP's needs.

FAS Flooding - Jerry Walker: Most serious flooding (erosion) on Big Hole River at High Road FAS. Entrance to this site was lost forcing permanent closure. Hamilton Ranches owns property on both sides of the FAS property. FWP plans to negotiate with landowner for another entrance. Minor flooding on Gallatin River near Belgrade and Manhattan—Gallatin Forks and Four Corners FAS.

Roundtable:

DJ – FWP leans too much toward commercial needs. Need to pay more attention to non-commercial fishing and hunting people of the state. Losing access in Beaverhead County (forest service lands—wilderness). Road to Antone has wilderness on both sides; afraid we're going to lose this area. Needs to be more access to forest lands.

Craig – SB 78 bridge access. Legislation is being re-crafted. Will bring draft bill to the group at next meeting.

Tom – Off-road vehicle access.

Gene – Issue of river shuttle industry.

FAS Issues and Concerns:

Wayne Johnston of Montana Board of Outfitters, Mack Minard and Russ Kipp of Montana Outfitters and Guides Association, Lee Kinsey and Robin Cunningham, fishing outfitters were present to give their perspectives and answer questions with regard to commercial use of FAS.

Rick and Bob characterized issues identified from previous meetings.

Points of discussion:

Region 3 cap on outfitters/guides

Statistics of commercial use on Montana Rivers. *Wayne Johnston will put numbers together for Region 3 rivers vs. the rest of the state. (Historical Number of Outfitters and Guides attached)*

Resource protection

Crowding/Overuse

Regulations/Restrictions

Guide training and testing

Etiquette/Tolerance

River management – *Charlie Sperry: Rules for River Management outlines a process for river recreation plans to maintain or improve conditions on rivers. Thresholds trigger management plans. This group could help identify projects in the region and elevate request to regional manager.*

Education (outreach – PSAs, tourism industry, videos, newspaper articles)

Landowner licenses/compensation (*will come back to this at a later date – next agenda*)

Code of Ethics

Perceptions

Budget/Manpower to conduct surveys

Board of Outfitters is under Dept. of Labor and Industry. *Regulatory boards are under one agency. Irrelevant where they are. Purpose of Board is to handle regulatory functions, licensing, administrative functions. Board is self-supporting.*

Revenue sources – create different avenues to generate revenue sources. Charge everyone to maintain sites, i.e., parking fee sites.

CAC Caucus

Good session. Need chance to talk and think about what we discussed today. Concerns over too many guides/outfitters, we were off base given the statistics provided today.

Maria Blevins: Survey on Madison will look at fishing in general. Will keep track of boats by stickers at different sites. This is a snapshot, not complete numbers.

Jerry Walker: Sampling survey won't address commercial vs. non-commercial. Numbers don't solve the problem. Still need to negotiate the solution.

Cyndi: Focus our thoughts on education component between now and next meeting.

Rick: In depth thought on etiquette.

Amy: Interest in subcommittee to talk about education—what it would look like. *Amy, Cyndi, Michael, Rick, and Maria will serve on committee. Committee will look at what the message would be, who would be involved, funding, what quality of experience should be. Will send something out prior to next meeting.*

Bob: Get meeting minutes out earlier.

DJ: We need to go in other directions besides fishing access.

Pat: Bison issue needs to be put on agenda. Glenn Hockett has asked to come to our next meeting.

Tom: We need to know what the five big players are going to do.

Bob: Move to give one hour to bring forward their issues.

Tom: Involve everyone. Limit their time to ten minutes each.

Amy: We aren't going to solve the bison issue. Thoughts on what we want them to prioritize, I think there's a role for us to play.

Pat: This is a large issue for FWP. CAC's role is to be liaisons with communities. Take this opportunity to listen.

Cyndi: Panel discussion. As a group, ask questions and interact.

Pat: Glenn Hockett, Amy (GYC), Stockgrowers, State Vet, and FWP will be invited to talk about bison issue.

DJ: We need to listen to both sides—pros and cons.

Tom: Amend to have 1-1/2 hour discussion. **Joe** seconded.

Motion carried.

Trapping Resolution – Joe Cohenour

Bob: Move we accept resolution drafted by Joe.

Dennis: Second.

Discussion: Who is this going to? Can't support wolverine trapping. What are the ramifications if we vote for this? Trapper education.

Tom: Move to table.

Cyndi: Seconded.

More time is needed to look at this. Send comments to Joe by June 30. Joe will redraft resolution and send out by mid-July. We will address it at our October meeting.

Fort Peck Hatchery – LeRoy Mehring

LeRoy read a letter from Chris Hunter. \$1-2 fishing license increase would be a solution allowing other species to be reared at the hatchery year-round. Legislation would be required. Does committee want to support a license fee increase or our original recommendation of a \$3 increase on warm water fish stamp to fund as a warm water hatchery? FWP's position is leaning toward increase fee on general fishing license and raising all species.

Sam: Stand on our original recommendation.

Tom: Second Sam's motion.

DJ: Objection. It only makes sense to use it year-round.

Vote: 3 abstained. In favor – 6. Opposed – 6.

Current motion dead.

Take up at next meeting. Invite Chris Hunter from Fisheries Division.

Motion to adjourn. Seconded.